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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/560,539	04/28/2000	Roy Curtiss III	3116-4355	3756

21888 7590 03/25/2003

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EXAMINER

NAVARRO, ALBERT MARK

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1645

DATE MAILED: 03/25/2003

18

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/560,539

Applicant(s)

Curtiss et al

Examiner

Mark Navarro

Art Unit

1645



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 2-8, 12-22, and 32-37 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 2-5 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 6 and 16 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 7, 8, 12-15, 17-22, and 32-37 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some* c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

- 14) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). 17
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Applicant's response filed May 10, 2002, (Paper Number 16) has been received and entered. Consequently claims 2-8, 12-22 and 32-37 are pending in the instant application.

Claim Objections

1. Claims 6 and 13 are objected to because of the following informalities: Claims 6 and 13 fail to end the sentence of the claim with the punctuation mark of a "period." Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention.

The specification is objected to under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to provide an enabling disclosure without complete evidence that the claimed biological materials are known and readily available to the public or complete evidence of the deposit of biological materials.

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The specification lacks complete deposit information for the deposit of plasmid pMEG-771. It is not clear that the plasmid pMEG-771 is known and publicly available or can be reproducibly isolated from nature without undue experimentation.

Exact replication of a plasmid is an unpredictable event. Although applicant has provided a written description of a method for selecting the claimed plasmids, this method will not necessarily reproduce plasmids which are chemically and structurally identical to those claimed.

Because one skilled in the art could not be assured of the ability to practice the invention as claimed in the absence of the availability of the pMEG-771 plasmid, a suitable deposit for patent purposes, evidence of public availability of the pMEG-771 or evidence of the reproducibility without undue experimentation is required.

If the deposit has been made under the provisions of the Budapest Treaty, filing of an affidavit or declaration by applicant or assignees or a statement by an attorney of record who has authority and control over the conditions of deposit over his or her signature and registration number stating that the deposit has been accepted by an International Depository Authority under the provisions of the Budapest Treaty, that all restrictions upon public access to the deposit will be irrevocably removed upon the grant of a patent on this application and that the deposit will be replaced if viable samples cannot be dispensed by the depository is required. This requirement is necessary when deposits are made under the provisions of the Budapest Treaty as the Treaty leaves this specific matter to the discretion of each State. Amendment of the specification to recite the date of deposit and the complete name and full street address of the depository is required. As a possible means for completing the record, applicant may submit a copy of the contract with the depository for deposit and maintenance of each deposit.

If the deposits have not been made under the provisions of the Budapest Treaty, then in order to certify that the deposits comply with the criteria set forth in 37 CFR §1.801-1.809, assurances regarding availability and permanency of deposits are required. Such assurance may be in the form of an affidavit or declaration by applicants or assignees or in the form of a statement by an attorney of record who has the authority and control over the conditions of deposit over his or her signature and registration number averring:

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(a) during the pendency of this application, access to the deposits will be afforded to the Commissioner upon request;

(b) all restrictions upon the availability to the public of the deposited biological material will be irrevocably removed upon the granting of a patent on this application;

(c) the deposits will be maintained in a public depository for a period of at least thirty years from the date of deposit or for the enforceable life of the patent or for a period of five years after the date of the most recent request for the furnishing of a sample of the deposited biological material, whichever is longest; and

(d) the deposits will be replaced if they should become nonviable or non-replicable.

In addition, a deposit of biological material that is capable of self-replication either directly or indirectly must be viable at the time of deposit and during the term of deposit. Viability may be tested by the depository. The test must conclude only that the deposited material is capable of reproduction. A viability statement for each deposit of a biological material not made under the Budapest Treaty must be filed in the application and must contain:

- 1) The name and address of the depository;
- 2) The name and address of the depositor;
- 3) The date of deposit;
- 4) The identity of the deposit and the accession number given by the depository;
- 5) The date of the viability test;
- 6) The procedures used to obtain a sample if the test is not done by the depository; and
- 7) A statement that the deposit is capable of reproduction.

As a possible means for completing the record, applicant may submit a copy of the contract with the depository for deposit and maintenance of each deposit.

If the deposit was made after the effective filing date of the application for patent in the United States, a verified statement is required from a person in a position to corroborate that the hybridoma cell line described in the specification as filed is the same as that deposited in the depository. Corroboration may take the form of a showing of a chain of custody from applicant to the depository coupled with corroboration that the deposit is identical to the biological material described in the specification and in the applicant's possession at the time the application was filed.

Applicant's attention is directed to In re Lundack, 773 F.2d. 1216, 227 USPQ 90 (CAFC 1985) and 37 CFR §1.801-1.809 for further information concerning deposit practice.

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3. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The claims are vague and indefinite in the recitation of a “derivative.” One of skill in the art would be unable to determine the metes and bounds of a derivative since it is unclear in what manner the bacterium is to be derivatized. Since it is unclear how the bacterium is altered to form a derivative, there is no way for the person of skill in the art to ascribe a discrete and identifiable class of bacteria which are derivatives. As a suggestion, amendment of the claim to recite “attenuated bacterium” will be sufficient to overcome this rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Wright et al.

The claims are drawn to a microorganism comprising the vector pMEG-771, or modifications thereof, with a gene encoding an antigen.

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Wright et al (Gene Vol. 49, pp 311-321, 1986) disclose of a microorganism comprising dual origin plasmids with an inducible origin of replication.

In view that Wright et al disclose of microorganisms comprising dual origin plasmids, the disclosure of Wright et al is deemed to be a "modification" of the vector pMEG-771, and consequently deemed to anticipate the claimed invention.

Claims 2-5 are allowed.

Claims 7-8, 12, 14-15, 17-22 and 32-37 are objected to as depending upon an objected claim.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark Navarro, whose telephone number is (703) 306-3225. The examiner can be reached on Monday - Thursday from 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM. The examiner can be reached on alternate Fridays. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor Lynette Smith can be reached at (703) 308-3909.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist, whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.

Papers related to this application may be submitted to Group 1645 by facsimile transmission. Papers should be faxed to Group 1645 via the PTO Fax Center located in Crystal Mall 1. The faxing of such papers must conform with the notice published in the official Gazette 1096 OG 30 (November 15, 1989). The CMI Fax Center number is (703) 308-4242.



Mark Navarro

Primary Examiner

March 20, 2003